7/8/69 West Terre Haute
PAMPHLET FILE
Vigo County Public Library

FLOOD-PRONE AREA OF WEST TERRE HAUTE, IND.

The flood plain of the Wabash River in the vicinity of West Terre Haute is wide, flat, and highly developed. The communities of West Terre Haute and Taylorville are protected by levees for lower-stage floods, but are subject to flooding as higher-stage floods overtop levees at rather infrequent intervals. Floods can cause extensive damage when levees are overtopped and breached. To prevent unexpected financial loss and danger to lives, any new development should be compatible with the degree of flooding that may result when the Wabash River overflows its banks. This pamphlet is intended to alert the future developer with regard to unwise use of flood plains.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Indiana District Office
Room 516, 611 N. Park Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

1969

INDIANA ROOM

FLOODS AND FLOOD DAMAGE

Floods in the United States cause an average yearly loss of about 80 lives and $1 billion. Improvements in flood forecasting and rapid communications have decreased the number of lives lost in recent years, but the dollar loss and the tragedy of damaged or lost homes are increasing.

THE RIVER AND THE FLOOD PLAIN

The flow of a river is usually confined to a well-defined channel that meanders through the river valley. However, at times the river overflows because of heavy rains or rapid snowmelt and uses the wide, flat areas adjacent to the channel to carry a part of the flow. These wide, flat areas are the natural floodways of the river and are called flood plains. During a major flood, the flood plain may be covered to a depth of many feet with water moving at a high velocity. At such time, any person or structure in the path of the water may be in danger.

MISUSE OF FLOOD PLAINS

The flood plain may appear to be an attractive area for development. This is particularly true in urban communities where land is expensive. Many housing projects and commercial and industrial buildings have been constructed on the flood plains without considering the risk. Much development has occurred because people tend either to forget past experience or to be unaware of possible flood danger. When houses or factories are built on the flood plains, the floodway designed by nature for carrying away excess floodwaters is obstructed. The increased development of flood-prone lands accounts for the growing monetary loss from floods.

BENEFICIAL FLOOD-PLAIN USE

Flood damages can be prevented or reduced by careful planning and development of flood plains. Such planning and development requires close cooperation by local government and all the people it represents. Flood-plain lands can be best used for flood-proofed structures, natural areas, parks, or other safe uses.

MAPS OF FLOOD-PRONE AREAS

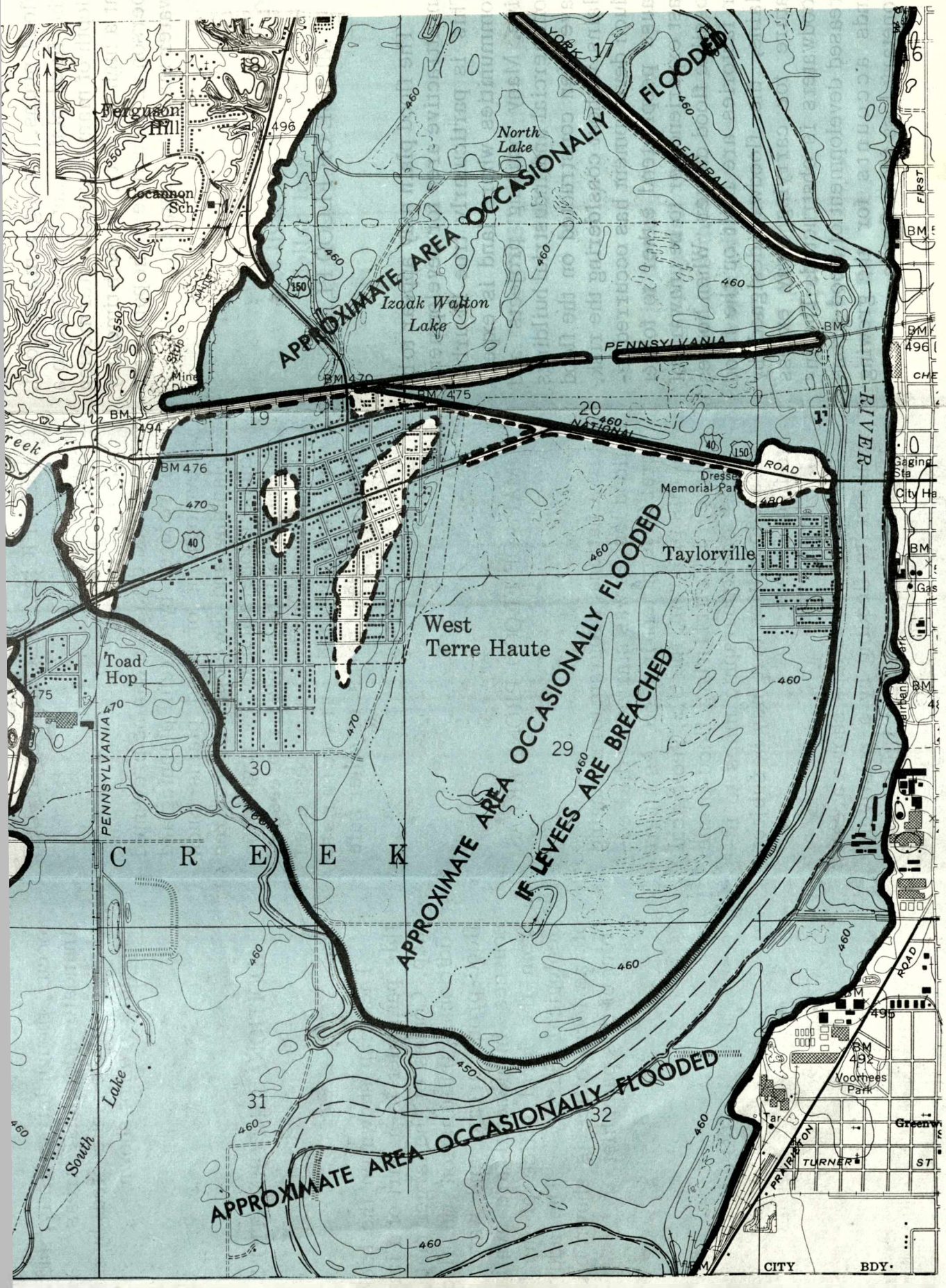
A national program for managing flood losses was started by the Federal Government in 1966. As a part of this program, the U.S. Geological Survey is outlining flood-prone areas on topographic maps to indicate localities that may be subject to flood losses.

Each of these maps shows areas subject to flooding by a relatively large flood. Even larger floods may occur, though infrequently, and may inundate additional areas. Areas that may be inundated by small streams are not shown.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The map shown on the back of this pamphlet is a part of a larger map. Copies of the larger map and additional information on floods, flood-prone areas, and water resources in general are available from the local office of the U.S. Geological Survey. The address of the local office is shown on the front of this pamphlet.

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D.C.


APPROXIMATE AREA OCCASIONALLY FLOODED
APPROXIMATE AREA OCCASIONALLY FLOODED IF LEVEES ARE BREACHED
APPROXIMATE AREA OCCASIONALLY FLOODED
Ferguson Hill
Cocannon Sch.
North Lake
Izaak Walton Lake
PENNSYLVANIA
NATIONAL ROAD
Taylorville
West Terre Haute
Toad Hop
C R E E K
South Lake
RIVER
CITY BDY.
1 MILE
0
½
1